



First Lady Unveils New Dollar Coin Designs

May 4, 1999

Washington, D.C. – First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin today unveiled the design for the new dollar coin at a White House ceremony honoring Native American women and their accomplishments.

“How fitting that the first U.S. coin of the new millennium should carry the image of the Native American woman whose courage and quiet dignity provides such a powerful link to our past,” said Mrs. Clinton. “The Sacagawea coin honors an extraordinary woman who helped shape the history of our nation and preserves her important legacy for future generations.”

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said, “This new dollar coin is a graceful tribute to part of America’s history and will be a striking addition to our coinage and currency system.”

Other participants joining the ceremony were U.S. Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow, Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs Assistant Secretary Kevin Gover, U.S. Mint Director Philip N. Diehl, the coin’s designers, Glenna Goodacre and Thomas D. Rogers, Sr., and representatives of the Shoshone and other Native American tribes.

“Over the last year, the Mint consulted with a wide range of Americans in choosing to honor Sacagawea and in selecting the final coin designs,” said Mint Director Philip N. Diehl. “This included public hearings, coin design exhibitions and requests for comments, which resulted in more than 130,000 letters, faxes and Internet comments.”

Authorized by the United States \$1 Coin Act of 1997, the new dollar coin replaces the current Susan B. Anthony Dollar Coin, which has circulated since 1979.

The new dollar coin will be gold in color, have the same diameter as the Susan B. Anthony Dollar Coin, bear a smooth edge (in contrast to the reeded edge of the Susan B. Anthony Dollar Coin) and have a wider border than existing U.S. circulating coinage. The use of a gold-colored alloy, the smooth edge and the wider border will ensure the new dollar coin is easily discernible for the visually challenged. The Mint is currently conducting research to develop an alloy to meet the requirements of the legislation, including mechanical and chemical simulated wear and tarnish testing.

Glenna Goodacre’s obverse design depicts Sacagawea — the young Shoshone woman who during the years 1804–1806 assisted the Lewis and Clark expedition en route from the Ohio River Valley to the Pacific Ocean and back. The portrait shows Sacagawea in a three-quarter position with her baby, Jean Baptiste, on her back, and the inscriptions Liberty, In God We Trust and the year of issue, 2000, as required by law. Goodacre, from Santa Fe, New Mexico, is best known in Washington as the sculptor of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial. Ms. Goodacre based her obverse design on historical research and the likeness of a young Shoshone woman who served as a model.

Tom Rogers’ reverse design depicts a soaring bald eagle and seventeen stars, representing the number of states at the time of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and the inscriptions United States of America, E Pluribus Unum and One Dollar. His previous coin designs include the obverse of the Robert F. Kennedy Commemorative Silver Dollar, the reverse of the American Eagle Platinum Coin, and the reverse of the Vietnam Veterans’ Commemorative Silver Dollar.

Note to Editors: The event was webcast live on the U.S. Mint website at www.USMINT.gov, where the event press kit is available in the website’s press room.” Photographs of the new dollar coin may be downloaded @www.usmint.gov/reading_room/photo.cfm

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